



AOT in Action

TOURISM WORKS FOR ARIZONA!

Issue 126 – September 18, 2006

Welcome to AOT in Action, your weekly e-newsletter from the Arizona Office of Tourism (AOT).

A Message from the Director:

Good morning.

AOT is taking the “Grand Canyon: Hidden Secrets” IMAX film on the road again, and today marks the film’s debut in Vancouver as our Arizona delegation begins a two-week Road Show through Canada. AOT received a prestigious Mercury Award from the Travel Industry Association of America for the Grand Canyon IMAX Road Show in the UK in April 2005, and we are proud to bring this award-winning program to another of our most important international markets. During the two-week show, the film will be screened in Vancouver, Calgary, Toronto and Montreal for schoolchildren, consumers, and the travel trade and media. In addition, AOT will be joined by our extremely valuable partners from around the state in conducting sales and media calls in each of the markets in order to keep these groups up-to-date on all the latest news in the Grand Canyon State. The response in Canada has been tremendous thus far, with most of the screenings nearing a capacity sell-out. If you haven’t had the opportunity to experience the “Grand Canyon: Hidden Secrets” IMAX film, it shows every day at the National Geographic Grand Canyon Visitor Center in Tusayan, and it is definitely an Arizona treasure that should not be missed.

Have a great week.

Margie A. Emmermann
Director
Arizona Office of Tourism

AOT News Flash

AOT Presents “Economic Impact of the Travel Industry in Arizona” Workshop Series

Please mark your calendars for AOT’s newest workshop series, featuring information from the first full-scale “Economic Impact of the Travel Industry in Arizona” report. The economic impact workshops will be held at five locations throughout the state, with each presentation being tailored to the counties that are near that location. The Economic Impact of the Travel Industry in Arizona report features county level travel data on each of Arizona’s 15 counties, which will give communities invaluable information on the amount of spending and number of jobs tied to the travel industry in their area. This type of data is vital for communities to explain the value of the travel industry to key stakeholders and secure funding for tourism programs. The workshops will focus on providing communities with methods for using the valuable information in the report to achieve their objectives. Please see below workshop schedule for which counties will be reported at which workshop. To register for a workshop please contact Sarah Martins at smartins@azot.gov or by phone at 602-364-3687.

September 27, 2006

1 p.m. – 3 p.m.

Hampton Inn

245 London Bridge Road

Lake Havasu City, AZ, 86403

Counties to be covered: Mohave, La Paz, and Yuma

October 18, 2006

10 a.m. – 12 p.m.

Best Western Payson Inn

801 North Beeline Highway 87

Payson, Arizona 85547

Counties to be covered: Yavapai, Gila, Graham and Greenlee

October 20, 2006

1 p.m. – 3p.m.

Little America

2515 East Butler Avenue

Flagstaff, AZ

Counties to be covered: Coconino, Navajo and Apache

November 1, 2006

10 a.m. – 12 p.m.

Hilton Tucson El Conquistador Golf and Tennis Resort

10000 North Oracle Road

Tucson, AZ 85737

Counties to be covered: Pima, Cochise and Santa Cruz

November 8, 2006
10 a.m. – 12 p.m.
Pointe Hilton Squaw Peak Resort
7677 North 16th Street
Phoenix AZ 85020
Counties to be covered: Maricopa and Pinal

Last Chance!!! Got Travel Agent Exposure?

AOT is once again producing the annual Arizona Sales Guide for Travel Agent Magazine which is distributed to over 50,000 travel agents throughout the US. Now is the time to take advantage of this great advertising opportunity. The Arizona Sales guide is a supplemental piece designed for travel agent use and compliments the Professional Travel Planner's Guide to Arizona. The guide highlights the regions of Arizona, what's new information, activities and events in a brief, easy-to-use supplement. The supplement will be released in the January 15th issue of Travel Agent Magazine. Additional copies of the supplemental guides are distributed at trade shows and sales missions and used as additional fulfillment materials. To reserve your space, please contact Chris Coon at [ccoone@questex.com](mailto:ccoon@questex.com) or at 818-227-4070.

Trippin' with AOT

Trade Show Opportunities

The annual Japan Sales Mission is scheduled to take place October 21-28, 2006. The mission will be coordinated by AOT's Japanese representative, Osamu Hoshino, and will include representatives from the states of Arizona, Utah, New Mexico and Wyoming. The sales mission consists of destination development seminars and workshops in the key cities of Tokyo, Nagoya and Osaka. If you would like additional information or are interested in attending please contact Kristy McKinnon at 602-364-3696 or kmckinnon@azot.gov.

Industry News

First-Ever Travel Leadership Summit Held in D.C.

Leaders of the travel industry launched the Discover America Partnership, a new long-term, inbound campaign to brighten America's image abroad and to make Congress and the administration more supportive of the importance of foreign visitors to the U.S. economy. First announced last May (TA, 5/10), the goal of the partnership is to increase the number of foreign visitors by 10 million a year. Sponsored by the Travel Industry Association, the two-day Travel Leadership Summit was designed to provide travel industry leaders an opportunity to communicate directly with policymakers about key issues affecting the travel and tourism industry. The event kicked off Tuesday night with a rally and reception at the Washington Convention Center followed by more than 30 state-sponsored dinners across the Nation's Capital. More than 1,000 travel industry leaders participated. At an outdoor press conference Wednesday, Rep. William D. Delahunt, D-Mass., said that the country's image "is at the lowest ebb" and

there are profound implications for U.S. diplomacy. He called the partnership a "new tool to reverse the trend." Jay Rasulo, TIA national chair and chairman of Walt Disney Parks & Resorts, told the gathering that "We object to the idea that keeping visitors out makes the country safer." (A TA Special Report; Orlando Sentinel.com)

Campaign Launched to Strengthen Image by Unlocking Power of Travel

Business leaders joined public officials Wednesday at a Capitol Hill news conference and rally to call national attention to the growing crisis of America's declining image abroad. Recognizing the impact on economic and national security, these leaders called for a nationwide effort to strengthen America's public diplomacy efforts by leveraging the potential of travel and tourism to create "people-to-people" diplomacy. The newly launched Discover America Partnership issued a national challenge to attract 10 million more international travelers to the U.S. annually. The event drew nine TV cameras and was covered in major print publications including The Washington Post, Bloomberg, International Herald Tribune, Washington Times and the LA Times, just to name a few. For more information on the Discover America Partnership go to www.PowerofTravel.org.

Phoenix makes new Monopoly board

Move over Kentucky Avenue, here comes Camelback Mountain. According to the Phoenix Convention & Visitors Bureau, the Phoenix landmark finished 11th in nationwide voting and will be part of the new Monopoly board, which was announced Tuesday morning in New York City's Times Square. In finishing 11th, Camelback Mountain now sits on the red space occupied by Kentucky Avenue in the original Monopoly board. It will be flanked by Disney World and Waikiki Beach. Times Square and Boston's Fenway Park were voted No. 1 and No. 2. According to the Phoenix CVB, more than 3 million online votes were cast and Phoenix topped Seattle, Philadelphia, Miami, Denver, Minneapolis, Nashville, St. Louis, Houston, Atlanta, Cleveland and Dallas. The Monopoly Here & Now edition is taking the 1935 board game and giving it modern venues and values. In addition to the new properties, there will be new appraisals and players who land on Times Square with a hotel will pay \$20 million. (Phoenix Business Journal online)

Arizona Represented in Travel + Leisure Golf List

Travel + Leisure Golf has published its list of the 10-best U.S. golf resorts. Kiawah Island Golf Resort, South Carolina, took the top spot, followed by Pebble Beach Resorts, California; Pinehurst Resort, North Carolina; Bandon Dunes Golf Resort, Oregon; and Ritz-Carlton, Kapalua, Hawaii. Others on the top 10 list include The American Club, Kohler, Wisconsin; The Boulders Resort & Golden Door Spa, Arizona; Four Season Resort Scottsdale at Troon North, Arizona; Princeville Resort, Hawaii; and Sea Island Resorts, Georgia. (Travel + Leisure Golf, Sept.)

Check in for LAX Flights throughout Los Angeles

Instead of hauling bags, strollers, skis and other items through long lines at ticket counters to

check them on airplanes, Los Angeles International Airport passengers will be able to drop off luggage and obtain boarding passes at locations throughout the city, under a program announced Friday. Officials hope that the program will revolutionize how passengers use LAX and will eliminate an inconvenience for travelers and decrease the security risk presented by long lines at ticket counters and at skycap stands. Under the new program, passengers can check up to two bags and obtain a boarding pass for a \$5 per-person fee. They then board a bus for LAX, where they go straight to the security checkpoint. The service will be launched this month as the Los Angeles Convention Center, the Union Station FlyAway and the Port of Los Angeles cruise ship terminal. (Los Angeles Times.com/Travel)

Hotel Indigo Taking Off

InterContinental Hotels Group opened its fifth Hotel Indigo in downtown Dallas. The 170-room Hotel Indigo Dallas is a conversion from a Holiday Inn--a nationally registered landmark built in 1925. Three Hotel Indigo properties are slated for Texas; one opened in Houston earlier in the summer and another is under development in San Antonio. Additional Indigo projects are slated for Ottawa, Canada; Scottsdale, Ariz.; Nashville and Knoxville, Tenn; Columbus, Ind.; and Sarasota, Fla. (Travel Agent Central.com, 9/8)

Camping with Kids

Last year, 48 million Americans headed into the woods, and the numbers are expected to rise more than 20% over the next five years as time- and budget-crunched families look for inexpensive ways to spend time together, says Newsweek. Outdoor opportunities don't end with Labor Day. Autumn means uncrowded campgrounds and cooler weather (read fewer mosquitoes). And, of course, there's great fall foliage from the Pacific Northwest to the Appalachian Trail. For many moms and dads, the idea of setting up camp in the woods seems overwhelming in any season. So Newsweek offers some tips on how to get started. (Newsweek.com, 9/18)

Four of ten luxury hotels now offering spas

The spa trend at luxury properties is clear with four out of ten US properties under development now including that amenity, according to a study. That compares with 27 percent of existing luxury and upper-upscale hotels offering spas, says the study from PricewaterhouseCoopers Research with information supplemented by Smith Travel Research and the International Spa Association. The study found that 1.9 percent of all US hotel projects had spa facilities and services compared to 0.6 percent of all existing hotels. Spas were found predominately in the luxury hotels. "This is a dramatic trend reflecting the lifestyle appeal of hotels to an increasing number of business and leisure travelers," said Bjorn Hanson, a principal with PricewaterhouseCoopers. (Travelmole.com 9/14/06)

More Americans Passing Up Vacations to Get Ahead

The official end of summer is approaching, signaling the end of peak vacation season and the return of the working masses to the daily grind. But many of us aren't trudging back to work well

rested from a couple of weeks of lying on the beach. Increasingly, Americans loaded with work are foregoing their vacation time and clocking more hours on the job, widening the disparity between the U.S. and other countries where vacations are mandatory and often stretch to a month of idle bliss. The U.S. is the only industrialized country that does not require employers to give workers paid time off--vacation leave, sick leave or maternity leave. It's up to employers to design vacation policies, and about 25% of U.S. workers get no paid leave at all, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics. (Chicago Tribune.com/Business, 9/13)

Las Vegas Sees Fewer Visitors in July

Las Vegas reported fewer year-over-year visitors in July for the third consecutive month. The city hosted slightly less than 3.37 million monthly visitors, down 0.5% from July 2005, the Las Vegas Convention and Visitors Authority said late Wednesday. Year-to-date, the citywide visitor count of more than 22.73 million was up just 0.3% compared with the first seven months of 2005, which was ultimately the busiest year in local history with nearly 38.6 million annual visitors. Occupancy at Las Vegas hotels reached the 95% mark in July. (Las Vegas Review-Journal.com/Business; Special to TA)

Report: Marketing Outpaces Ad Spending

Non-advertising-based forms of marketing – especially newer sectors such as branded entertainment, event marketing and experiential marketing – have emerged as the fastest growing segment of the media economy, outpacing advertising, as well as consumer and industrial spending on media. The finding, which comes from the 2006 edition of the Communications Industry Forecast being released this week by Veronis Suhler Stevenson, comes as strong evidence that U.S. marketers and their agencies are shifting spending into forms of marketing that have tangible measures of ROI associated with them. According to Media Daily News, it also suggests that Madison Avenue's shift from conventional ad-based media planning toward marketing-based communications planning is also having an effect, and that the definition of media is expanding well beyond traditional formats like TV, radio, newspapers and magazines. Perhaps most significantly, much of the shift toward new forms of marketing spending, especially the kind of experiential marketing aimed at active young adults, is a sign that marketers need to find new ways of reaching some important consumer segments. (Marketing & Tourism Trends 9/15/06)